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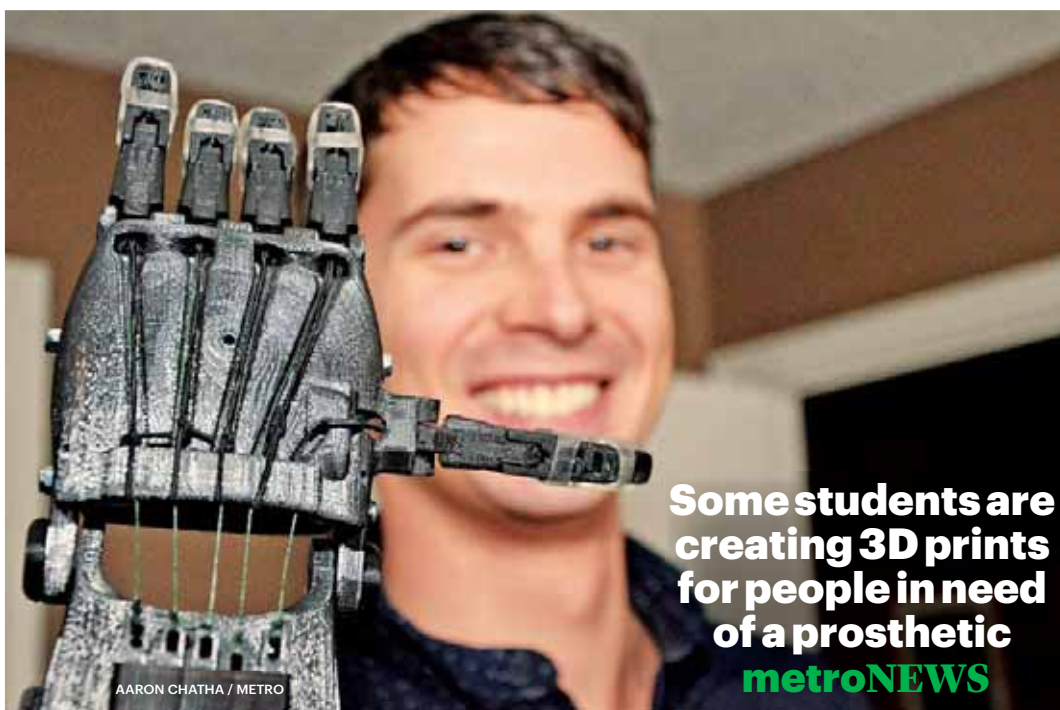


**GUN CONTROL
PRESIDENT OBAMA
MOVED TO ACTION**
metroNEWS



Your essential daily news | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2016

High -12°C/Low -13°C Chance of flurries



**Some students are
creating 3D prints
for people in need
of a prosthetic**
metroNEWS

A HELPING HAND

Rampage ends in 13 charges

MCKENZIE TOWNE

**Driver accused of
causing extensive
damage to nearby
home, police car**



**Lucie
Edwardson**
Metro | Calgary

One man faces a slew of charges after he allegedly went on a rampage with his vehicle.

Insp. Keith Cain said police were called to a home in the north part of McKenzie Towne on Sunday around 8:30 p.m. after reports of a truck driving through the door and rear wall of a home's garage.

"It's believed that the driver then exited the vehicle with a crowbar and used it to cause extensive damage to the inside of the house by smashing windows, destroying appliances and making holes in the

walls," he said.

The home's occupants escaped uninjured.

"It's certainly traumatic, I can only imagine how frightened they must have been," said Cain.

Police located the truck a short while later near the intersection of Deerfoot Trail and Barlow Trail SE where they attempted a traffic stop. The driver rammed the police vehicle before driving away.

The truck was later located at a gas station at the intersection of 64 Avenue and Centre Street North, and was followed to a home in the 1000 block of Berkley Drive N.W., where officers arrested the suspect. During the arrest, three police officers and a member of EMS were assaulted.

Brian Joseph Russell, 28, of Calgary faces a total of 13 charges including assaulting a peace officer and hit and run.

Police believe Russell was previously in a relationship with an individual who lives at the home where the rampage began.

REPORTS: North Korea announces successful testing of hydrogen bomb metroNEWS

THE BOLD NEW
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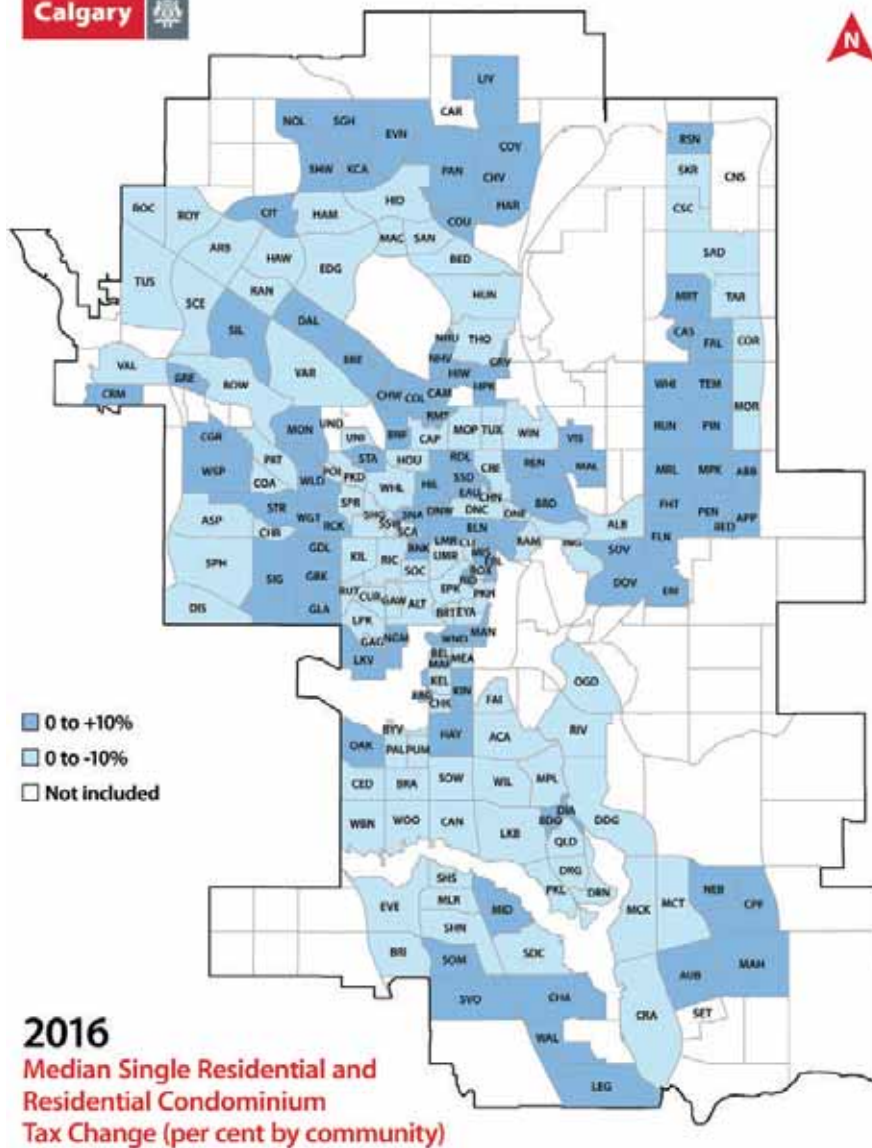




TOYOTA



High-end property value dives



Most Calgary residences didn't increase or decrease more than 10 per cent in value, according to the latest assessment. COURTESY CITY OF CALGARY

ASSESSMENT

Most moderate to low-priced homes remain unaffected



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

The City of Calgary is mailing out its annual property and business assessment notices — and is reminding owners to carefully review their notice, as the numbers reflect the market value as of July 1, 2015, not this past December.

The city tabulates the data based on market value each July, as per legislation.

“Read it well; there’s information on there about when the property or business was assessed,” said a city spokesman.

“Carefully analyze to ensure that their value seemed accurate as of that date — and anything that happened after that will be reflected in 2017.”

Most homeowners with moderate to low-priced properties shouldn’t expect much of a change in their notices — the same can’t be said

for homeowners with high-priced properties, however.

Overall, residential properties in Calgary have decreased by one per cent, with most communities within 10 per cent higher or lower than the previous year’s assessment.

“In a nutshell, we saw the value of high-value properties drop fairly dramatically,” said Nelson Karpa, director and city assessor.

“However, we saw the value of more moderately and lower-priced homes, which are the bulk of the inventory in the city of Calgary, actually remain fairly stable; a little bit of decline in some areas, a

saw an overall market value decrease of four per cent.

Karpa said it’s important to note differences in property type.

Industrial properties overall increased slightly in property value, while office properties saw a decrease, mostly in downtown properties.

“Even in the office community, we saw this as a downtown issue,” said Karpa. “We did see a significant drop in some of our downtown commercial space.”

Karpa said vacancies and changes to rent in downtown office spaces played a big role in the decrease of

In a nutshell, we saw the value of high-value properties drop fairly dramatically. However, we saw the value of moderately and lower-priced homes ... remain fairly stable. Nelson Karpa, director and city assessor with the City of Calgary

little bit of incline in areas.”

The 2016 assessments for condominiums actually saw an overall increase.

The median assessment for single residential homes was \$480,000, while the median assessment for residential condominiums was \$280,000.

Non-residential properties

value. Suburban office spaces did not see the same level of decreases.

Calgarians who have questions or issues with their assessment are encouraged to call the City of Calgary Assessment before March 7, which is the cutoff for the customer review period.

+ MEANWHILE, EDMONTON VALUES ON THE RISE

Capital's prices up by 1.7%

City assessors in Edmonton announced Monday that the average home went up in value — by 1.7 per cent.

Assessors said the median market value of a home in the city is now worth \$408,000.

Assessment manager Rod Risling stressed, however, that the assessments are

based on market activity from July 2015, not the current value under a suffering economy.

“Assessed values represent a snapshot of what occurred in the past,” he said. “We’re just reflecting what the market is telling us.”

Like Calgary, apartment dwellings saw an increase over last year — in this case,

nine per cent.

Risling noted that apartments are still seen as strong investments in Edmonton, despite high vacancy rates.

Despite the increase, he added, apartments won’t likely see a spike in rental rates.

AARON CHATHA/METRO CALGARY
AND RYAN TUMILTY/METRO EDMONTON

\$215B

The total value of residential properties assessed in Calgary

93%

... of residential properties' taxes in Calgary will stay within a 10 per cent increase or decrease

IN BRIEF

Impaired charges laid after wrong-way crash
RCMP have laid a dozen charges after a pre-Christmas head-on collision in southeastern Alberta that resulted in serious injuries.

A sport-utility vehicle and a car collided Dec. 17 on the Trans-Canada Highway near Dunsmore, about 300 kilometres southeast of Calgary. Police say the car was travelling east in the westbound lanes of the divided highway.

Three people who were among those injured were airlifted to Calgary from the nearby Medicine Hat hospital for further treatment. Curtis Beisel of Cypress County is facing eight impaired-related charges, along with another four counts of dangerous driving causing harm.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

RCMP seek armed Airdrie robbery suspect
RCMP continue to investigate an armed robbery at the Liquor Depot on Main Street in Airdrie that took place Christmas Eve.

Several people were seen to be inside the Liquor Depot and outside in the parking lot at the time of the robbery, which happened around 5:45 p.m.

The RCMP would like to speak with those people, as they may be witnesses to this crime. Police believe the suspect was wearing a winter vest with a black coloured hoodie underneath. It is also believed that he was wearing black jeans, black shoes with white rubber soles and that he has dark coloured hair.

Police are also looking to identify a possible male witness, wearing a black hockey touque, heavy tan jacket and blue jeans.

METRO



If you're looking for a parking spot near the end of the CTrain line, you may want to consider seeking one closer to the city centre.

JENNIFER FRIESEK/FOR METRO

Train parking demand slips, but still strong

CALGARY TRANSIT

Reserved Park and Ride very popular far from city core



Brodie Thomas
Metro | Calgary

To reserve, or not to reserve.

That's the question faced by commuters who use the Park and Ride lots on a daily basis.

According to Calgary Transit, demand for parking spots has dropped slightly over last year, but the wait lists are still significant.

In total, the city has 7,450

names on the waiting list, down from 8,200 this time last year. That's a decline of five per cent across the entire Park and Ride system. There are nearly twice as many people on the waiting list as there are renting. Calgary Transit has 3,994 spots rented out as of this month.

Neil McKendrick, manager of operational transit planning, said the demand for parking is greatest at the stations farther away from the city centre.

The longest waiting lists are at Tuscany, Somerset-Bridlewood, Shawnessy, and 69 Street station.

"We still have six stations where we have more than 100 per cent of the reservation stations purchased," he said. "The reason for that is we oversell."

Three more stations have

"We still have six stations where we have more than 100 per cent of the reservation stations purchased."

Neil McKendrick, manager of operational transit planning

more than 90 per cent of the available parking reserved.

Calgary Transit is allowed to reserve up to 50 per cent of any spaces in any of its lots. It has four lots where it doesn't reserve any because of low demand.

Park and Ride lots closer to the city centre have eliminated

their waitlists altogether.

"This time last year we had a waiting list at Crowfoot, we don't have one now," said McKendrick. "We had a waiting list at Dalhousie. We don't have one now." Fish Creek and Canyon Meadows also no longer have waiting lists, according to McKendrick.

He said much of that is probably due to people who were waiting for a spot, but realized they weren't having trouble getting a free spot anyway, so they took their name off the list.

He said Calgary Transit reaches out to people on the waiting list, telling them of available spots at nearby lots in an attempt to whittle down the waitlist. "The bottom line for us is the parking lots are still full," said McKendrick.

DAUGHTER DEATH CASE

Accused likely to seek bail: Lawyer

The lawyer for a man arrested in Ontario and charged in the 2014 death of his four-year-old daughter in Alberta says he is likely to seek bail for his client.

Oluwatosin Oluwafemi was arrested last month and flown back to Calgary to face a charge of second-degree murder.

The 39-year-old from Keswick, Ont., appeared briefly via video in a Calgary courtroom Tuesday and his case was set over to Jan. 21. Lawyer Alain Hepner said he has received the pathologist's report and a description of the incident but is still waiting for more information.

He expects he will be asking that his client be granted bail before the end of the month and doesn't think Oluwafemi poses any risk if released.



"He didn't leave the country, he was in Toronto the whole time, they knew where to get him."

Alain Hepner, lawyer for Oluwatosin Oluwafemi

"He didn't leave the country, he was in Toronto for the whole time, they knew where to get him. He was arrested and brought back but it's such a sensitive matter that I want to have all my cards in a row before I can establish a proper application for bail," Hepner told reporters.

Hepner said he hopes to have a preliminary inquiry to determine if there is enough evidence to proceed to trial at the next court appearance.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Woman aims to reunite with dad



Vernette Eklund, Toni Rempel and Bonnie Eklund in a family handout photo from the 1970s THE CANADIAN PRESS

FAMILY

Mother never told man after 'brief affair' in summer of '69

A classified ad aims to connect a daughter with a father who doesn't know she exists.

"Is your name Gary?" the ad begins. "Were you in Regina, SK on business in 1969?"

The ad is accompanied by a decades-old photo of a smiling,

petite blond woman and an even blonder little girl with poker-straight hair.

Toni Rempel took out the ad on behalf of her half-sister Bonnie.

"My mom, in the summer of 1969, met a guy named Gary, but she's not sure of his last name. She thinks maybe he was Polish or Ukrainian," Rempel, 39, said from her home in Kelowna, B.C.

"It was the summer of '69 and there was all of that free love. My mom ended up becoming pregnant with my sister and she never told Gary about her."

Rempel said her 45-year-old sister, Bonnie Eklund, is working as a doctor in San Diego, Calif., and has been hoping to learn more about her father for the last 20 years.

"She's told me over the years that she feels there's a part of her missing and she wishes she knew but she doesn't really have the courage herself to go searching. I asked her if it was OK if I did," said Rempel. "We're trying to figure out who he is and trying to establish a possible connection."

Their mother, Vernette Ann Eklund, was working at the Re-

gina General Hospital and met Gary at a nightclub at the Westward Inn in Regina. The two embarked on a "brief affair."

Rempel said Gary, who lived in Calgary at the time, would fly into Regina on business and might have been in pharmaceutical sales. He would have been in his 20s, had blond hair, a slender build and was about six feet tall.

Rempel is asking anyone who might know Gary to contact her so she can give her sister a happy ending. She can be reached at t.rempel@yahoo.ca.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

LEGISLATURE

Redford to attend her portrait unveiling

The image of former premier Alison Redford is expected to be immortalized on the walls of the Alberta legislature this spring — and Redford will be on hand for the unveiling.

"Former premier Redford has confirmed that she would like to attend the unveiling of her portrait, so the Speaker's office is currently working with her to co-ordinate a date for that," Cheryl Oates, spokeswoman for the premier's office, said.

Redford's official portrait and the artwork of her successor and fellow Progressive Conservative Dave Hancock have been sitting in climate-controlled storage for more than six months at the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Redford's portrait is oil on canvas by Calgary artist Liela Chan and cost \$12,500.

Hancock's is oil on linen by Edmonton artist Tom Menczel at a cost of \$12,046.

The former premiers got to choose their own artists.

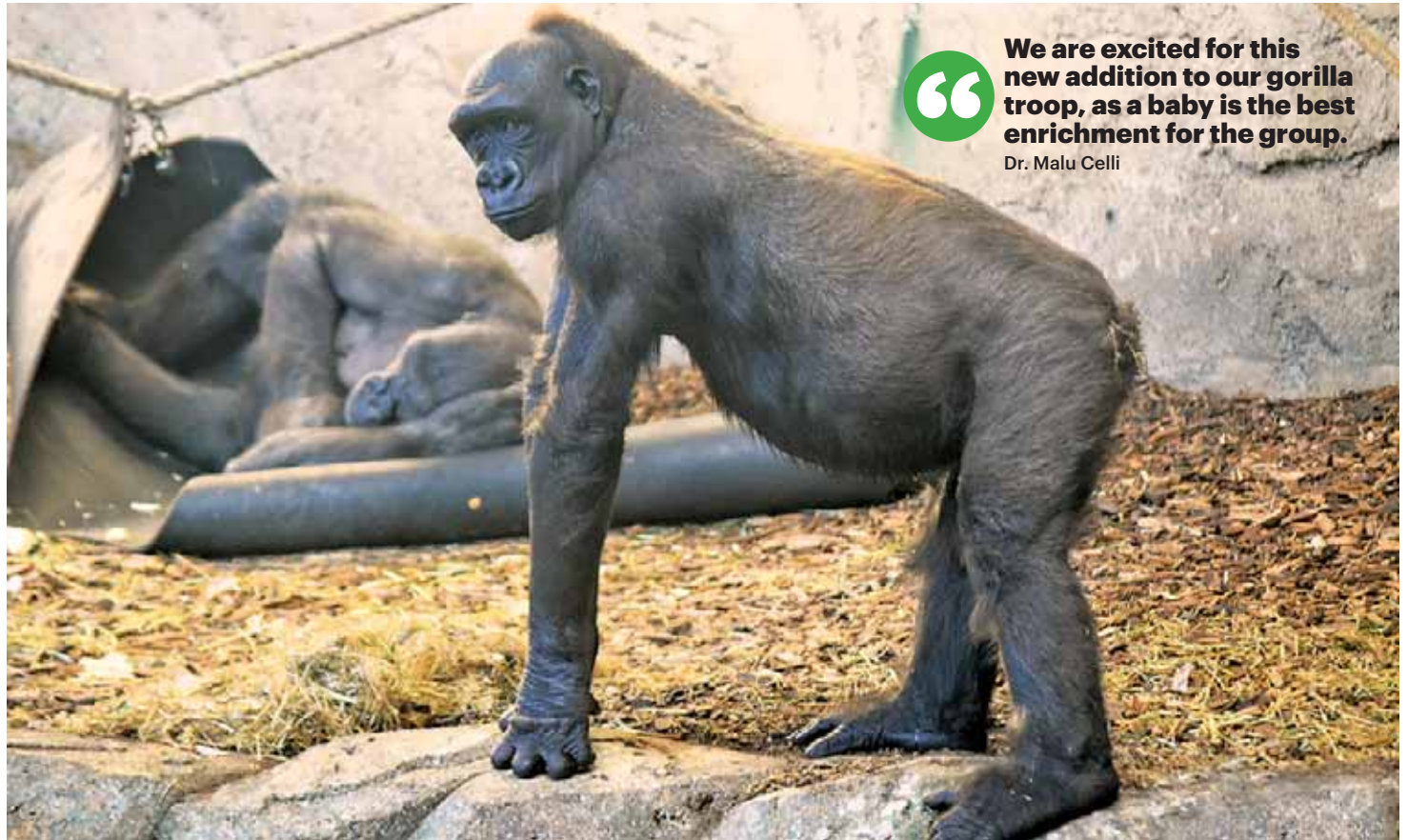
The premier's office pays for and organizes the painting while the Speaker's office, which is in charge of the legislature building, is responsible for the unveiling ceremony.

Redford, Alberta's 14th premier, is working with the Conference Board of Canada on an initiative to harmonize energy development with environmental protection.

She could not be reached for comment.

Redford resigned as a member of the legislature soon after she quit as premier.

Redford has refused in retirement to discuss details of what happened on her watch as premier except for broad statements such as "Mistakes were made." THE CANADIAN PRESS



We are excited for this new addition to our gorilla troop, as a baby is the best enrichment for the group.

Dr. Malu Celli

CALGARY ZOO

Great ape expectations

The Calgary Zoo announced Tuesday that the gorilla family will be welcoming a new member to their ranks in early March.

In a release, the zoo said its 14-year-old gorilla Kioja is pregnant, marking the first gorilla pregnancy since 2008, when Yewande was born.

"We are excited for this new addition to our gorilla troop, as a baby is the best enrichment for the group," says Dr. Malu Celli of the Calgary Zoo.

"In the wild, gorillas are critically endangered, and by adding another member to our

troop we are continuing to ensure there is genetic diversity within captive populations and safeguard the long-term future of this species."

Thirty-seven-year-old Kakinga, who has fathered nine other offspring since 1993 — seven of which have survived and all of which were born at the Calgary Zoo — sired the anticipated baby.

In the 50 years the Calgary Zoo has had gorillas, Kakinga has been the zoo's most successful silverback since becoming troop leader in 1993. Kioja arrived at the Calgary Zoo in

2009 along with her half-sister Dossi from the Bronx Zoo, where she was born in 2001.

According to the zoo, the gorilla team has been working with Kioja to help her prepare for birth, as this is her first offspring.

This includes specialized training, conducting regular ultrasounds, behavioural analysis and close monitoring by the zoo's veterinary staff.

Normal gestation for gorillas is roughly 37 weeks, much the same as a human pregnancy.

METRO

Above: Kioja, a Western lowland gorilla at the Calgary Zoo, is an expectant mom for the first time.

Below: Ultrasound reveals the baby that will be a new addition to the troop. BOTH IMAGES COURTESY CALGARY ZOO





The Glenbow's Chris Petrik says the museum has always been about connecting the community. JEREMY SIMES/METRO

Glenbow offers free Thursdays

MUSEUM

Move aims to re-introduce Calgarians to arts scene



Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

The Glenbow Museum's Chris Petrik said he hopes downtown workers don't vacate the area around 5 p.m. and, instead, check out the museum the first Thursday of every month.

The reason? The Glenbow will be opening its doors and visitors can roam the exhibits free of charge.

"It gives downtown workers another opportunity to stay downtown, enjoy the Glenbow and support some of the other downtown attractions," said Petrik, director of development at the museum.

Though the monthly outings aren't in direct correlation with the city's economic downturn, Petrik said he recognizes many have been left with less disposable income, meaning many

might cut their spending on the arts.

"That's the feedback we've seen: (People) are more selective for their discretionary spending, so it gives us that opportunity to help people out."

Petrik said the Glenbow's mandate is to engage the community. In particular, the museum noticed 4,000 Calgarians visited the space after it opened its doors for free on Family Day during the 2013 flood.

"That (event) really resonated for us," he said. "So we thought what else we could do for the community."

So, the museum approached Servus Credit Union to make Free First Thursdays a reality.

"The Glenbow is for the people of Alberta," he said. "We are one of the cultural cornerstones in Calgary."

He said he hopes the initiative introduces new Calgarians to the museums and re-introduces it to locals who haven't been there in a while.

"The majority of Calgarians first experience the Glenbow when they're in school," he said. "We have some amazing exhibitions, so it's a great opportunity for people to see what the Glenbow is all about."

4,000

The number of Calgarians who visited Glenbow Museum after it opened its doors for free on Family Day during the 2013 flood.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SCHOOL

Students return nine months early



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

The students of St. Vincent de Paul School are finally back in their school — nine months early — after being displaced by a modernization project in the fall of 2014.

In October 2015, Education Minister David Eggen said 101 new school and moderniza-

tion projects in Alberta would be delayed. However, Calgary Catholic School District communications spokesperson Karen Ryhorchuk said factors came together to get this project done ahead of schedule.

The modernization for the K-9 school was originally announced in February 2014.

"It's a big achievement and the success of the project is due to various factors," Ryhorchuk said. "The seamless permit-

ting program from the City of Calgary to the pricing and tender package that aligned, everything basically worked to get the school finished early."

Modernizations to the school were mostly centred around infrastructure upgrades, including a new roof and floors, heating, ventilation and air handling systems and a new food service kiosk.

Of most interest to students, however, were improvements

to the science labs, learning commons and gym change and storage rooms.

"These modernizations help create optimal learning environments for students so they can continue to thrive," said Ryhorchuk.

St. Vincent de Paul School was approved for funding at the same time as St. Cyril school, which will be undergoing renovations until September 2016, according to the CSSD website.

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Calgary startup gives contractors new tool

JOBS

Database pairs homeowners with skilled tradespeople



Jennifer Friesen
For Metro

When Dumar Jaramillo woke up on May 1, he went to his contracting job as a control systems engineer for an oil company. By the end of that day, he was unemployed.

It's a story Albertans are all too familiar with, as thousands of layoffs swept through the oil and gas industry. But Jaramillo has decided to take matter into his own hands — literally.

The husband and father to a six-year-old girl recently joined JobJar, a new online platform specifically designed for tradespeople.

The database connects homeowners in need of repairs with people who are handy with tools — which JobJar calls “skilled doers.” Some jobs, like connecting a new light fixture or repairing a hole in the wall, are too small for general contractors, leaving homeowners playing the waiting game.

“As of right now, that gap in the industry is unattended,” said Naomi Pereira, owner of JobJar.

“If someone needs help, we want them to have an answer a click away.”

Already with a roster of 1,300 skilled doers and still accepting more, Pereira said she's on track to launch JobJar in January.

Over the next month, she'll be vetting the applicants, having them provide criminal record



Dumar Jaramillo was always building things around the house, and now, after losing clients in the oil and gas industry, he's turning to his construction skills. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

“If someone needs help, we want them to have an answer a click away.”

Naomi Pereira

checks and references.

Homeowners upload their requests, and skilled doers offer their availability and price for the job, giving homeowners the chance to choose who they hire, and applicants the chance to build a reputation.

“You don't need to be profes-

sionally certified to do this,” said Pereira. “But these skills are a small enterprise. With us at the back office, we can give them the tools they need to become a little independent business.”

After losing his major client in May, Jaramillo spent months in living uncertainty and eating up his savings.

But he worked as a contractor for years and said he knew he had to move quickly, doing whatever he needed “to put food on the table for my family.”

“Everyone in the industry feels the pressure, everyone's feeling the fear,” he said. “It's tough because you feel it at home. Your

family relies on you and you're supposed to provide for them, but you can't. It's bad times in the industry and we all need to diversify our skills to stay afloat.”

Jaramillo has always been handy with tools, so he said JobJar was a perfect transition, adding that JobJar gives him “hope that something will come through in the end.”

“This time shall pass,” said Pereira.

“It's just a question of how long can you wait until it passes? So people are looking into what other skills they have to offer if even if it's just one thing, JobJar is a tool for anybody.”

FRASER INSTITUTE

New report highlights Alberta's growing debt



Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Edmonton

With a new report indicating Alberta's debt is set to grow faster than any other province, the opposition is warning the province is on the fast track to real financial pain.

In a report released Tuesday, the Fraser Institute said Alberta has seen its debt to gross domestic product ratio, which is an economic measure of a province's financial health, rise by 92 per cent since 2007.

Wildrose leader Brian Jean said he worries about the NDP's plans to add more debt over the next few years and believes instead they should look at why the province's spending is so high.

“Now is the time for Alberta to take on spending, not pile on debt,” he said.

Jean said combined with the recent downgrade in the province's credit, this should be a warning sign for the NDP.

He said with rough eco-

nomics hitting the province, Alberta can also expect to see less revenue from taxes and royalties.

“I think it's much worse than people are forecasting at this stage, because they are overestimating revenues,” he said.

Finance minister Joe Ceci's spokesperson Leah Holoday, said the government believes the Fraser Institute report actually shows the province is in strong shape.

“The Fraser Institute study highlights the province is the only jurisdiction in Canada to be in a net financial asset position,” she said.

She said the government's spending plans are about getting through the tough times and building what the province needs.

“Alberta is currently experiencing significant fiscal challenges due to the drop in commodity prices. The government has responded with a budget that aims to spur job creation, promote economic growth and invest in infrastructure to keep Albertans working.”

COURT

Man deemed fit to stand trial again

A central Alberta man is going to trial for a second time in an alleged gang-related killing nearly seven years ago.

Christopher Fleig of Red Deer has been deemed fit to stand trial in the drive-by shooting of Brandon Prevey in April 2009.

Prevey, who was a well-known criminal in Edmonton and Red Deer, was hit by seven of 15 rounds that peppered his car on a residential street.

Fleig, who is 31, was to face a new trial in November after he successfully appealed a 2012 first-degree murder conviction and life sentence.

But a psychiatric assessment was ordered instead due to concerns over his mental state.

Fleig, who is accused of arranging the shooting of 29-year-old Prevey, is to go to trial in June 2017.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

PROSTHETICS

Students lending a hand worldwide



Aaron Chatha
Metro | Calgary

Students in Calgary and Edmonton are starting the new year by offering a helping hand — specifically, a 3D printed prosthetic hand, delivered to people in need across the world.

Colin Pischke, owner of Print Your Mind 3D, is spearheading a project allowing high school students to get credit for learning to print and assemble working prosthetic hands for people who

are either missing the appendage or don't have full function of their fingers.

“If someone has \$5,000 and can buy a bionic prosthetic — this isn't who this hand is going to,” said Pischke. “This is going to someone who would never otherwise be able to afford a prosthetic hand. Now, for the first time, they're picking up a baseball bat. They can pick up a pencil to write. They're swimming and doing all these things they could never otherwise have done.”

Pischke partnered up with a local program called Innov-

ate, which will allow students to get high school credit for the project, and with a U.S. company called e-NABLE, which provided the designs for the hands and will deliver them to people in developing countries who are in need of them.

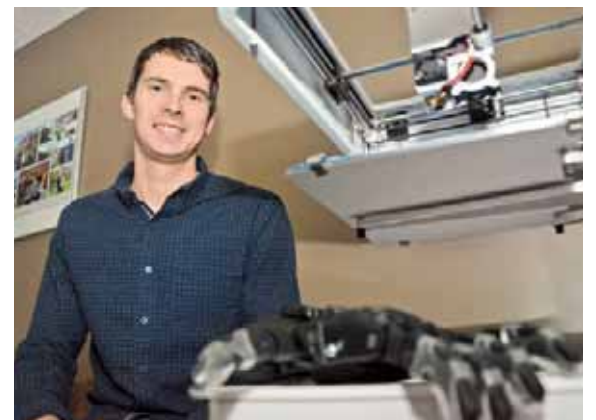
“This project is a great way to show students how to use modern technology to influence lives around the world,” Pischke explained.

Now that the project is underway, Pischke's next step is to raise money to organize a build event, where students will come

“This is going to someone who would never otherwise be able to afford a prosthetic hand”

Colin Pischke

together in Calgary to print and build 25 to 30 hands. The event is on GoFundMe under Calgary, 3D Printing Prosthetic Hands.



Colin Pischke kicked off the project to show how modern technology can be used for more than creating trinkets and novelty items. AARON CHATHA/METRO

60 days of mental health chats ask: What makes you stronger?

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Event meant to help dispel myths and remove stigma



Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

For 60 days Calgarians will be able to engage in conversations surrounding how to expunge the stigma surrounding mental illness and suicide, and what makes them stronger.

Beginning Jan. 18, and celebrating their 60th year of supporting mental health in the city, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Calgary region, will be hosting the 60 Conversations in 60 Days initiative with the #NowImStronger theme.

Joy Pavelich, leader of community engagement for the CMHA Calgary region, said the conversations will take many shapes, including blog

posts, videos and big events like the Calgary Flames mental health game.

"The whole idea is there will be room for people to comment on these stories," she said. "The call to action is 'what makes you stronger?'"

Pavelich said CMHA will be using the conversations and comments they generate as participatory action research that will be analyzed by their partners at the University of Calgary.

"The U of C is going to analyze it for us and we are going to report back to the community on what they have told us," she said.

Steven Leong, executive director of the I Will Survive Association, who is hosting a podcast conversation on Feb. 23, said the event will help dispel myths and remove stigma.

"We believe one of the ways to best do that is to just talk to each other, have these conversations with each other — have the uncomfortable conversations enough times until they become comfortable conversations," he said.

Both Pavelich and Leong lost mentally-ill loved ones to suicide, and they said the event can help both those with the challenges and those



Have the uncomfortable conversations enough times until they become comfortable conversations.

Steven Leong

"Where do they find their strength? And that will turn into a guide for us on how to move forward and how we plan our work."

who care for them.

"This tells them that we can work together at finding solutions for what our biggest challenges are," said Leong.



The Canadian Mental Health Association will be holding conversations with citizens in a number of ways, and the U of C will be analyzing some of the information and data collected.

OJO IMAGES/REX FEATURES

TRANSPARENCY

Alberta's ethics chief looks to refresh lobbyist registry



Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Edmonton

Alberta's Ethics Commissioner wants it to be easier to peek behind the curtains of power, with a better lobbyist registry they hope to unveil this fall.

The office has put out tender documents looking for a

company to redesign not only the public facing website for the registry, but the entire computer system that tracks Alberta's lobbyists.

Kent Ziegler, chief administrator of the office, said the registry was first put together in 2009 and it needs an update.

"Technology has changed and our system just can't keep up," he said.

The registry allows people to search through the records off all registered lobbyists to see what issues they were advocating on and what government officials they met while doing the work.

Ziegler said there are issues with smart phones and certain web browsers that don't work with the site, but the biggest issue is the search capacity.

"The system is just antiquated and it's just not serving the needs that people want anymore," he said.

He said when the upgrades are done he wants a registry that will give people exactly what they are looking for, so "they can go in and say 'I want to know who lobbied this minister at this time on this issue.'"

Lobbyists are required to register in Alberta when they meet with a public office holder, which includes MLAs, cabinet ministers and employees of the provincial government.

The registry tracks both lobbyists who work with lobbying firms and people who work in-house at corporations and agencies.

Ziegler said the public

should have the ability to track lobbying efforts and updating the computer system is important.

"It's just a more open and transparent registry so people can see who is lobbying what."

The tender on the project has yet to close, but Ziegler said they hope to have a new system up and running late in the fall.

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STUDY

Homeless veterans total 2,250

For what's believed to be the first time, the federal government has estimated how many of Canada's homeless are former soldiers.

The March 2015 study by Employment and Social Development Canada estimates that 2,250 former soldiers use shelters regularly, about 2.7 per cent of the total homeless population that uses temporary lodging.

The report, which comes from a database that tracks 60 emergency shelters across the country, noted that the data does not capture the number of veterans who do not use shelters.

Researchers found that veterans who end up homeless tend to be older than non-veterans in the same circumstances. The average age of homeless veterans is 52, compared with 37 in the general population.

"Interestingly, there is a particularly high rate of episodic homelessness among female veterans," said the report.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Barn fire kills more than 40 racehorses

ONTARIO

Like losing a child, says one trainer who lost 7 animals

The deaths of 43 racehorses in a massive barn fire is more than just a professional catastrophe — it's akin to losing members of a family, one trainer said Tuesday.

Dan Lagace was working with seven horses that were

being housed at the Classy Lane Stables in the southern Ontario town of Puslinch, about 20 kilometres south of Guelph. All of his animals and three dozen others perished Monday night in a blaze that could only be subdued through the efforts of 50 firefighters from multiple communities.

"It's almost like losing a child," the 38-year-old said.

Lagace said the blaze also represents a devastating professional setback. He said he has virtually nothing left, since equipment amassed over years

was also destroyed in the fire.

The economic impact extends well into the close-knit, horse-oriented community, said Classy Lane co-owner Jamie Millier. Grooms, veterinarians, blacksmiths and other professionals involved in the industry will be feeling the effects of the equine deaths for months to come, he said.

Millier had been vacationing in Florida when he got word of the fire and hastily flew back to Canada. He said 43 horses were in the barn when the fire broke out. The death toll

would have reached 45, but two other horses normally housed in the barn were out at races at the time.

The fire broke out on a night when temperatures dipped as low as -20 C.

Local crews responded quickly, but found the barn fully engulfed in flames once they arrived on scene.

Puslinch's fire Chief Steven Goode said the wintry weather caused hose lines to keep freezing up and created challenging road conditions.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 Tributes — Neighbour Madison Ross, 15, hangs ribbons, flowers and a stuffed pony she brought from home on a fence at Classy Lane Stables. Forty horses died during an overnight fire at the stables near Guelph, Ont.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

2 Fighting the inferno — Firefighters work to bring a blaze under control at the Classy Lane Stables, in Puslinch, Ont., on Tuesday.

ANDREW COLLINS/
THE CANADIAN PRESS

3 All that remains of the barn — Firefighters walk past the destroyed Classy Lane Stables on Tuesday.

HANNAH YOON/
THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Cities opposed homeless count, data show

The federal government is moving ahead this month with a nationally co-ordinated count of homeless people, despite opposition from cities. Cities complained they wouldn't have enough time to get resources in place to count every homeless person during one 24-hour period, and that a count in January would skew results as the cold would drive more people indoors. THE CANADIAN PRESS

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY

Prof in hot water over waiver request

A professor at Laurentian University has been removed from teaching an introductory psychology class after requesting that students sign a waiver agreeing to his use of crude language.

Dr. Michael Persinger was yanked from the class two months after providing students with a "Statement of Understanding" that contains a list of 27 words, from "politician" to the F-word to "Satan."

The "statement of understanding" also includes the warning "This course is rated 'R' for coarse language and ex-

66

It's not about academic freedom.

Dr. Robert Kerr

plicit content."

The Laurentian University Faculty Association has filed a grievance against the move, saying that it violates academic freedom.

Speaking to the CBC, Persinger said he uses some colour-

ful language because it's important for budding psychologists to feel like they can ask any question without being judged.

Dr. Robert Kerr, provost and vice-president of academic affairs at the Sudbury university, said the issue isn't academic freedom but rather the waiver put before students.

"It's not about academic freedom," Kerr said in an interview Tuesday. "It's simple that a faculty member cannot ask a student to sign a document ... as a condition to take his or her class." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Dr. Michael Persinger

TWITTER.COM

LEGALIZING MARIJUANA

Trudeau warned of tough fight globally

The Liberal government will have to do substantial work on the international stage before it can follow through on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's promise to legalize marijuana, new documents suggest.

That work will have to include figuring out how Canada would comply with three international treaties, all of which criminalize the possession and production of marijuana.

The treaties are:

- The Single Convention

on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol;

- The Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971;
- The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

Internationally, says a briefing note prepared for the prime minister, Canada will also have to find a way to essentially tell the world how it plans to conform to its treaty obligations.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Obama takes on gun lobby

UNITED STATES

Expanded background checks among planned steps

Tears streaking his cheeks, President Barack Obama launched a final-year push Tuesday to tighten sales of firearms in the U.S., using his presidential powers in the absence of tougher gun restrictions that Congress has refused to pass.

The president struck a combative tone as he came out with plans for expanded background checks and other modest measures that have drawn consternation from gun rights groups, which Obama accused of making Congress their hostage. Palpable, too, was Obama's extreme frustration at having made such little progress on gun control since the slaughter of 20 first-graders in Connecticut confronted the nation more than three years ago.

"First-graders," Obama said woefully, resting his chin on his hand and wiping away tears as he recalled the 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School. "Every time I



U.S. President Barack Obama gets emotional as he delivers a statement on executive actions to reduce gun violence. JIM WATSON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

think about those kids, it gets me mad."

Obama's 10-point plan to keep guns from those who shouldn't have them marked a concession by the president: He'll leave office without securing the new gun control laws he's repeatedly and desperately

implored Congress to pass.

Although Obama can take action around the margins, only Congress can enact sweeping changes that gun-control advocates say are the only way to truly stem a scourge of mass shootings.

The centrepiece of Obama's

plan is an attempt to narrow the loophole that exempts gun sales from background checks if the seller isn't a federal registered dealer. Whether that step can make a serious dent in unregulated gun sales is an open question, and one not easily answered.

It won't happen overnight. It won't happen during this Congress.... But a lot of things don't happen overnight.

Easily reversible by a future president, the guidance lacks the legal oomph of a new law, such as the one Obama and like-minded lawmakers tried but failed to pass in 2013. The Justice Department said the guidance "has no regulatory effect."

What's more, none of the steps would have probably prevented any of the recent mass shootings that Obama invoked: Aurora, Oak Creek, Charleston, Newtown, to name some. But Obama defiantly rejected that critique, dismissing it as the tired trope of gun lobbyists who question "why bother trying?"

"I reject that thinking," Obama said. "We maybe can't save everybody, but we could save some." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HIGHLIGHTS

The plan

1 Expanded background checks

Anyone who's in the business of selling guns must obtain a licence, regardless of where they sell, and must conduct background checks on their customers.

2 More FBI examiners

The FBI will hire more than 230 more staff to help process background checks. The National Instant Criminal Background Check System in 2015 received more than 22.2 million background check requests. The FBI is also working to improve the response time for alerting authorities that someone who is disqualified from buying a gun attempted to do so.

3 Lost and stolen weapons

A dealer shipping a gun is responsible for notifying law enforcement once it determines it was lost or stolen in transit.

4 Smart gun technology

The departments of Defence, Homeland Security and Justice have been directed to conduct or sponsor research into smart gun technology aimed at reducing the risk of accidental gun discharges and improving the tracing of lost or stolen firearms.

5 Mental health

The White House is proposing a \$500 million investment to improve mental health care.

CIVIL WAR

Syria's north short on food, medicine

Pro-government fighters recently evacuated from two besieged villages in northern Syria described harsh conditions there with scarce food and medicine, saying some residents are eating grass to survive and undergoing surgery without anaesthesia.

The villages of Foua and Kfarya have been under siege for more than a year, but the situation has worsened since

September. That's when insurgents captured a nearby air base where helicopters used to take off and drop canned food, vegetables, rice and bread to about 30,000 people in the mostly Shiite area.

"Our life was catastrophic in Foua and Kfarya," said Hussein Mahdi Kazem, a 16-year-old wounded fighter, speaking from a hospital bed in Beirut, where he was evacuated last

“Our life was catastrophic.”
Hussein Mahdi Kazem

month from Kfarya.

But the two Shiite villages are not alone in their suffering. Both sides in Syria's nearly 5-year-old conflict have used

siege tactics on towns or villages as a way of getting an area under control.

In retaliation for the siege of the Shiite villages, opposition activists say Syrian troops and members of Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group have taken harsh measures against a Sunni area of Syria of about 40,000 people near the Lebanese border.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Hani Ali Hassan was evacuated to Beirut from Foua, which has been under siege for over a year. HASSAN AMMAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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'Successful' H-bomb test in North Korea

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

If confirmed, could lead to sanctions and more isolation

North Korea said Wednesday it had conducted a hydrogen-bomb test, a defiant and surprising move that, if confirmed, would put Pyongyang a big step closer toward improving its still-limited nuclear arsenal.

A television anchor read a typically propaganda-heavy statement on state TV that said North Korea had tested a "miniaturized" hydrogen bomb, elevating the country's "nuclear might to the next level" and providing it with a weapon to defend against the United States and its other enemies.

The statement said the test was a "perfect success."

The test, if confirmed by outside experts, will lead to a strong push for new, tougher sanctions at the United Nations and further worsen already abysmal relations between Pyongyang and its neighbours.

North Korean nuclear tests worry Washington and others because each new blast is seen as pushing North Korea's sci-

entists and engineers closer to their goal of an arsenal of nuclear-tipped missiles that can reach the United States.

While a hydrogen bomb is much more powerful than an atomic bomb, it is also much harder to make. In a hydrogen bomb, radiation from a nuclear fission explosion sets off a fusion reaction responsible for a powerful blast and radioactivity.

North Korea is thought to have a handful of rudimentary nuclear bombs and has spent decades trying to perfect a multistage, long-range missile to eventually carry smaller versions of those bombs. After several failures, it put its first satellite into space with a long-



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

range rocket launched in December 2012.

Experts say that ballistic missiles and rockets in satellite launches share similar bodies, engines and other technology. The UN called the 2012 launch a banned test of ballistic missile technology.

Some analysts say the North hasn't likely achieved the technology needed to manufacture a miniaturized warhead that could fit on a long-range missile capable of hitting the U.S. But there is a growing debate on just how far the North has advanced in its secretive nuclear and missile programs.

In the first indication of a possible test, the U.S. Geological Survey measured an earthquake Wednesday morning with a magnitude of 5.1. An official from the Korea Meteorological Administration, South Korea's weather agency, said the agency believed the earthquake was caused artificially based on an analysis of the seismic waves and because it originated 49 kilometres north of Kilju, the northeastern area where North Korea's main nuclear test site is located. The country conducted all three previous atomic detonations there.

The size of Wednesday's quake is bigger than seismic



South Korea detected an "artificial earthquake" near North Korea's main nuclear test site Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

activity reported in previous atomic bomb tests. Yonhap news agency reported that quake monitoring agencies detected magnitudes of seismic activity of 3.7 in 2006; 4.5 in 2009 and 4.9 in 2013.

After the North's third atomic test, in February 2013, Pyongyang launched a campaign of

bellicose rhetoric that included threats to launch a nuclear attack on the United States and Seoul. North Korea claimed in 2013 that it had scrapped the 1953 armistice that ended fighting in the Korean War. Pyongyang has also restarted a plutonium nuclear reactor shuttered after a 2007 nuclear

deal that later fell apart.

Since the elevation of young leader Kim Jong Un in 2011, North Korea has ramped up angry rhetoric against the leaders of allies Washington and Seoul and the U.S.-South Korean annual military drills it considers invasion preparation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ASTRONOMY

Two galaxies colliding: NASA

Two galaxies have been photographed merging about 230 million light years from Earth, and one expert says "it will never look like a normal galaxy again."

The image, taken with the Hubble Space Telescope and released by NASA and the European Space Agency late last month, depicts two galaxies in the process of forming a "new" galaxy after they were drawn together by gravity.

"Every now and then the gal-

axies will be attracted to each other by gravity and they will essentially collide," explained Randy Attwood, executive director of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

He said galaxies usually look like pinwheels with spiral arms or glowing balls and they generally maintain a uniform shape.

"This one looks like something very strange is happening because the arms are sort of all over the place," he said

about the galaxies colliding in the Hubble image.

The U.S. space agency predicts that the Milky Way, the galaxy in which the Earth, sun and the rest of our solar system resides, will have a head-on collision with the neighbouring Andromeda galaxy in about four billion years.

While the event will fling the sun into a new region of our galaxy, the "Earth and solar system are in no danger of being destroyed." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



This Hubble Space Telescope image shows two galaxies that have collided 230 million light-years from Earth. COURTESY NASA

SYRIA

Villagers under siege

Pro-government fighters recently evacuated from two besieged villages in northern Syria described harsh conditions there with scarce food and medicine, saying some residents are eating grass to survive and undergoing surgery without anesthesia.

The villages of Foua and Kfarya have been under siege more than a year. In September, insurgents captured a nearby air base where helicopters used to take off and drop food to about 30,000 people in the mostly Shi-

ite area.

But the two Shiite villages are not alone in their suffering. Both sides in Syria's conflict have used siege tactics on towns or villages to gain control.

The border town of Madaya has been besieged since early July. People are burning doors for heat, a local official said. In all three villages, residents used to rely on troops or insurgents to bring food, but the smuggling has recently dropped sharply. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Top economists see a bumpy year ahead

ECONOMY

Oil and loonie unlikely to rebound soon, experts say

Canada's economy, much like its weather, started the New Year in a deep freeze. And while warmer times lie ahead, the growth rate in 2016 is likely to be tepid at best.

That was the consensus of the top chief economists at Canada's largest banks at the annual Economic Club of Canada forecast session in Toronto on Tuesday.

Oil prices: Slower growth in China, turmoil in the Middle East, and a market-share price war between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia-led OPEC mean oil prices are unlikely to regain their recent lofty highs any time soon, Scotiabank's



The country's top economists kick off the New Year with a forecasting session in Toronto. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Warren Jestin said. Even if oil prices rebound to \$60 US a barrel from below \$40 today, it won't be enough to reinvigorate investment in Canada's energy sector, he said.

The Canadian dollar: Closely tied to demand for oil, the Canadian dollar fell 16 per cent in 2015, its second-worst year on

record. Economists now expect the loonie to fall below 70 cents US this year, likely by mid-March, as the U.S. dollar strengthens on hikes in the U.S. Federal Reserve's interest rate. However, investors shouldn't expect a dramatic recovery in the loonie even if oil prices move off their current lows, Avery Shenfeld, chief

Scotiabank's Warren Jestin says oil prices are unlikely to regain their lofty highs any time soon. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

economist, CIBC World Markets, cautioned.

The housing market: Calgary house prices, dragged down by the sagging energy sector, could fall a further 5 to 10 per cent in 2016, said Doug Porter, chief economist with Bank of Montreal Financial Group. Vancouver and Toronto house prices, the highest in the country, will face "some kind of correction in the next five years," Porter predicts. For the rest of Canada, he's predicting a soft landing. The Bank of Canada's ultra-low interest rates are unlikely to change in 2016, he added. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

SELF-DRIVING CARS

S. Korea university tests driverless taxi

A South Korean university is testing a sedan that can pick up and transport passengers without a human driver, giving a glimpse into the future of autonomous public transport.

Seo Seung-Woo, director of the Intelligent Vehicle IT Research Center at Seoul National University, said the university has been testing the driverless taxi to transport disabled students around campus.

The vehicle, called Snuber, has been navigating the 4,109 square metre campus for the past six months without any accidents. It works in conjunc-

tion with a hailing app created by the university.

Companies around the world are betting that automated driving technology will transform public transportation.

In Japan, Robot Taxi Inc. plans to offer a full commercial service in 2020. In Greece, driverless buses called CityMobil2 have been tested in real traffic. General Motors said Monday it is investing \$500 million US in ride-hailing company Lyft Inc. and forming a partnership that could eventually lead to on-demand, self-driving cars.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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IN BRIEF

Workers denied bathroom breaks to get \$1.75M

A Pennsylvania company, American Future Systems Inc., that publishes business newsletters will pay about \$1.75 million US to 6,000 employees who had to clock out while going on short breaks, including for the bathroom.

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URBAN ETIQUETTE ELLEN VANSTONE



THE ISSUE

How do I cut my homophobic friend out of my life?

Dear Ellen,
I made a mistake of letting someone back into my life. This person had been a close friend for years, but our friendship quickly turned to turmoil after she burst into my home and told me how "disgusting" and "sinful" I was being with my choice of (same-sex) partner. She yelled and demanded that I end (either) my relationship or the friendship.

I feel that my choice in ending my friendship was a strong one, and cut the friendship that was full of homophobia.

Recently, I agreed to meet her for coffee to give her a chance to apologize. I have been told I'm too nice and give too many chances for forgiveness.

This is correct, as she just came full circle again; instead of confronting me with her disgust for my relationship, she went to friends we have in common.

I don't want to confront this person face to face, as I feel it would end with a few choice words of my own. But at the same time, I'd like to make it clear that this person no longer has a place in my life.

What should I do?

J.C.
Halifax

Dear J.C.,
I love how you say, "I feel that my choice in ending my friendship was a strong one, and cut the friendship that was full of homophobia."

Good manners are never more important than with the people we are close to.



That wasn't just a "strong" choice, my friend. It was the absolutely correct one by any standard. The person you had this "friendship" with is not a friend. She does not understand or accept who you really are. And her manners — what with the homophobia and bursting into homes to yell at people — are deplorable. Good manners are never more important than with the people we are close to, and she failed big time.

Notwithstanding your careful wording, your thinking does get fuzzy when you say "instead of confronting me with her disgust for my relationship, she went to friends we have in common."

Of course it's wrong of her to criticize you and/or your sexual orientation to friends behind your back. But why would you expect her to confront you about it again?

She already did that. There's nothing more to be said.

Frankly, it makes sense that you have no desire for another confrontation. You'd be breaking no rules of etiquette if you directly expressed your anger and disappointment to her, as long as your mode of expression was below 60 decibels and didn't contravene any sections of the Criminal Code. But you don't owe her anything. Judging by her backstabbing behaviour, she already knows how you feel.

As for your worries that you are "too nice" and "give too many chances for forgiveness," don't worry. There's no such thing as being "too nice"; it's just code for being a doormat, which you are not. And giving someone a chance for forgiveness doesn't necessarily require contact. She's perfectly wel-

come to go into counselling about her pathologically destructive homophobia, shower you with abject letters of apology, say extravagantly nice things about you behind your back to friends and send you flowers every week for a year, at which point any self-respecting person might consider forgiveness and renewed friendship.

In the meantime, cut her off completely. If you run into her, be as polite as you can, but decline to engage or open the door to further contact unless or until she earns it from afar. Remember, the less you say, the better.

Actions speak louder than words, and never more eloquently as when you take no action at all.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
scene@metronews.ca

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

What I hope gentrification won't paint over

I've been walking by the same window for three years. It's nondescript, sans signage, but always frames a painting; an inexplicable art window in between bars and boutiques on one of Toronto's overly hyped strips: Ossington Avenue.

I considered the window one of those oddities you find in any city, and until this weekend, never bothered to solve the mystery. Perhaps, I thought, an anonymous philanthropist was resisting commercialization and warp-speed gentrification — of the kind felt in any big city — by injecting a hit of art.

This weekend, the window held a field of poppies, crimson and dancing against a turquoise sky. On a grey day with a -22 C wind chill, I finally decided to figure it out.

It turns out Christian McLeod of 89 Ossington Ave. is a 46-year-old painter, and his live/work space is an echo of what the street used to be: cheap, deemed dangerous and undesirable, marked by car parks, a home reno store, an elevator mechanic's shop and other studios.

That was 10 years ago, and McLeod is among the holdouts, along with a cigar manufacturer and a dive bar. Places that put change into perspective, while they last — a synagogue in Chinatown, say — and are all the more valuable for it.

A French lady used to run a

sandwich-and-soup shop open for just three hours a day.

"You'd go up there one day and there'd be a sign: 'Gone to Paris, back in two weeks.'"

"It was quiet, it was almost abandoned," he says.

Due to residential zoning, McLeod's rent has stayed low. His new neighbours? "They're paying \$7,000 a month for some of these storefronts."

Zoning also means he can't hang signs to advertise his studio, but he's always hung a painting. Five years ago, he'd never believe Bang Bang, an ice cream sandwich shop, would draw 40-minute lineups. "I would have said, 'You're nuts.'"

And as the foot traffic has picked up, he's begun to leave his door open on warm weekends.

Neighbours who've researched the area's history figure his is one of the oldest houses on the street. They discovered an artist lived in his exact space in the 1860s, he says. But McLeod is well aware that he may be its last occupant. Some day soon, he expects the landlords to flip the switch, and condos will rise.

"It's their property. They've been so good to me," he says. "It's just business."

I tell McLeod I don't know why I waited so long to learn the story of one of my favourite windows. I'm lucky it wasn't too late.

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Check out #RichardSapper on Instagram for creative tributes to the acclaimed designer of the Tizio lamp, IBM ThinkPad, who died last week

'Tis the series premiere season

TELEVISION

New year, new episodes of 10 beloved TV shows

Brian Gasperek
For Metro Canada



Downton Abbey (Now airing)

This year marks the beginning of the end for one of the greatest Brit TV dramas of all time. The Crawleys return to PBS for a sixth and final season of Downton Abbey, which began airing Jan. 3. The final season has been airing in the U.K.

since the fall... but of course you've been patient and download-free, right?



Megan Fox steps into **New Girl's** awkward shoes.



Season 11 of **It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia** premieres tonight on FXX. ALL PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED/GETTY IMAGES

The Bachelor (Now airing)

One of TV's greatest guilty pleasures, The Bachelor, brought its addictive blend of romance, drama and superficiality back into our living rooms on Monday. This time around, two-dozen women are battling it out for the affection of Bachelorette finalist and fan favourite, Ben Higgins.

New Girl (Now airing)

It's hard to believe that four seasons of New Girl are already

in the can, but alas, the fifth kicked off last night. To start the season, fans witness Megan Fox temporarily filling in for Zooey Deschanel as the show's female lead, as Deschanel took time off to be a new mom.

It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia (Tonight)

As we saw from its ridiculously awesome '80s ski-movie parody trailer, It's Always Sunny is finally back tonight. And although Season 11 won't likely

feature any action on the slopes, we can't wait to see the gang back together.

American Idol (Tonight)

The 15th and final season of American Idol also starts this evening. If you gave up on the show years ago, you may want to tune back in for what's sure to be an epic last run. Along with host Ryan Seacrest, Harry Connick Jr., J-Lo and Keith Urban are returning as the show's final judges. It's going to be so big

that even Kanye auditioned.

Shameless (Jan. 10)

On Jan. 10, the most hilariously dark and dysfunctional family on TV today, the Gallaghers, are back for a sixth season. If for some reason you haven't watched the

American version of Shameless yet, you really need to get on it.

Workaholics (Jan. 14)

Stoners rejoice. Adam, Blake and Anders, our favourite doofus telemarketers, are back for a new season of Workaholics, starting Jan. 14. Judging by its brain-melting, acid trip of a trailer, the new season looks like it's going to be the weirdest one yet.

Agent Carter (Jan. 19)

The awesome Peggy Carter is taking her superhero butt-kickings to the West Coast for Season 2 of Agent Carter, which begins on Jan. 19. This time around, Carter will have her hands full with L.A.-based atomic age threats in the wake of the Second World War.

Portlandia (Jan. 21)

The hilarious duo of Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein are getting set to unleash 10 more hipster-ribbing episodes of Portlandia starting on Jan. 21. We're pulling for more Peter and Nance in Season 6.

The X-Files (Jan. 24)

The most highly anticipated premiere of the New Year is the return of The X-Files. Mulder and Scully are back to fight aliens and search for the truth in the six-episode mini-series that begins on Jan. 24. We're pumped!

Gillian Anderson in **The X-Files**.



JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

UnREAL gets real about the clichés of romance

THE SHOW: UnREAL, Season 1, Episode 9 (Lifetime)
THE MOMENT: The Proposition

Rachel (Shiri Appleby) is a producer of Everlasting, the Bachelor-like show within this show. Adam (Freddie Stroma) is her star, minor British royalty who wants only to promote his family's businesses. Rachel's boss Quinn (Constance Zimmer) expects Adam to propose to a contestant. But Adam and Rachel are sleeping together, and now

he's entreating her to quit the show with him. "You could work yourself into spinsterhood like Quinn," he says, "or you can run away with me. I can show you the world."

Hearing the word "spinsterhood," followed by the quote from Disney's Aladdin, I finally got what UnREAL is up to. It purports to be a juicy exposé of how fake "reality romance" is. Meanwhile, it's been lulling us into caring about Rachel's romantic fate. But surprise — the whole

thing is a bait and switch. Rachel's love story is as false as the contestants'. Love itself is the con. Clever!

Sure enough, one minute into the next episode, Adam dumps Rachel. In the rain. Every cliché is upended. The handsome prince is a

cad. It's happily never after. "The audience needs to believe it's real," Quinn says. How embarrassed we are to be caught out.

To drive the point home, the season finale ends with two people saying, "I love you" to one another. Just not the two you'd expect. And they probably don't mean it.

EXPOSING EXPECTATIONS
Series creator Marti Noxon makes us realize how ingrained our expectations are, that a show with a female hero will conform to romantic conventions.



Shiri Appleby stars as Rachel in Lifetime's UnREAL. CONTRIBUTED

BOOK EXCERPT WINTER CABIN COOKING BY LIZZIE KAMENETZKY

Gnocchi with wild mushrooms



There is something undeniably comforting about little pillows of potato gnocchi. When cooked properly, they should be tender and fluffy rather than dense and heavy. Serves 4 - 6

Ingredients:

- 1lb. 2oz. even-sized small floury potatoes, such as Maris Piper/Yukon Gold, unpeeled
- 2/3 cup 00 flour, plus extra to dust
- freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 Tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 2 banana shallots, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 11 oz. wild mushrooms, cleaned and sliced if large
- 1/3 cup dry white wine
- scant 2/3 cup double/heavy cream
- small handful of fresh parsley leaves,
- chopped fine sea salt and ground black pepper freshly grated Parmesan, to serve

Directions:

Cook the potatoes, whole in their skins, in boiling salted water for 25 minutes until they are tender. Drain the potatoes and, once cool enough to handle, peel the skins off and mash the flesh using a potato ricer or by pushing it through a sieve/strainer so it is lump-free and fine.

Put the flour, 1 teaspoon salt and a little nutmeg into



a bowl and add the potato, mixing with the blade of a knife.

Make a well in the centre,

add the beaten egg and mix together until well combined. Bring together with your hands but don't knead or you could make your gnoc-

chi tough.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough into sausage shapes, about 1/2 inch

wide, then cut into 1/2 inch pieces. Use the tines on the back of a fork to roll the gnocchi, giving them the characteristic ridges. Put on a floured baking sheet and chill until you are ready to cook. (You can cook them now or chill for up to 24 hours.)

Make the sauce. Melt the butter in a pan and add the oil and shallots. Cook for 10 minutes until softened and tender.

Add the garlic and fry for a further 30 seconds then add the mushrooms. Increase the heat and fry for 10 minutes until they are golden brown.

Add the wine and bubble for a minute. Add the cream, a splash of boiling water to loosen it a little and plenty of salt and pepper, then stir in most of the parsley. Bring a pan of salted water to the boil and add the gnocchi. They are cooked once they float to the surface, about 1-2 minutes.

Scoop out with a slotted spoon and divide among warmed serving bowls. Warm through the sauce and spoon over the gnocchi. Scatter with the remaining parsley and serve.

WINTER CABIN COOKING: DUMPLINGS, FONDUE, STRUDEL, GLUHWEIN AND OTHER FIRESIDE FEASTS
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PHOTO CREDIT: RYLAND, PETERS & SMALL

NASSIMA ROTHACKER/WINTER CABIN COOKING



RECIPE

Celeriac and parsnip velouté

I adore velouté, which means 'velvety' in French. It is smooth and creamy and, well, like velvet in the mouth. A big bowl of steaming velouté will cling enticingly to your bread as you dunk it.

Ingredients

- 1 celeriac (about 500 g/1lb. 2oz.),
- scrubbed 2 parsnips (about 350 g/12 oz.),
- scrubbed 2 small onions, 1 halved and 1 finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves,
- crushed 5 fresh thyme sprigs
- 100 g/scant 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 100 g/3/4 cup cooked peeled chestnuts
- 100 ml/scant 1/2 cup whole/full-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons Madeira
- a squeeze of lemon juice

- sea salt and ground black pepper
- double/heavy cream, to serve

Instructions

Peel the celeriac and parsnip (reserving the peel) and finely chop the flesh.

Put the peel and 100 g/3/4 oz. of each vegetable into a pan with the halved onion, the garlic and half the thyme.

Add 1.2 litres/5 cups water and simmer gently for 30 minutes. Strain the stock.

Heat the butter in a pan, add the finely chopped onion and fry for 10 minutes until soft.

Add the remaining parsnip and celeriac, the chestnuts and the remaining thyme.

Add the stock and milk and simmer for 20 minutes until the vegetables are tender. Strain, reserving the liquid and then whiz the solids in a blender until smooth (you will get a smoother soup this way than if you blend in the pan with a hand blender).

Return the puréed vegetables to the pan through a sieve/strainer and add enough of the cooking liquid to form a rich velouté.

Season to taste and add the Madeira and a little squeeze of lemon.

Bring back to a simmer then serve with a good swirl of double/heavy cream.

EXCERPT FROM LIZZIE KAMENETZKY'S WINTER CABIN COOKING

Some holiday leftovers are best left uneaten

FOOD SAFETY

Can you eat it? Experts explore the dangers

If your post-holiday leftovers are calling your name, reconsider.

Remember: the “best before” dates on your food items don’t apply once you’ve opened them.

If your kitchen is often brimming with leftovers, consider turning your refrigerator temperature down. They’ll last longer. Turn the dial lower than the typical 4 C, around 1-4 C. This will slow down the growth of harmful pathogens.

We canvassed industry food and nutrition experts for advice on some food items you might be tempted to eat a few days later.

An open carton of chicken stock

Verdict: Use within three to five days.

“There are legit ‘don’t get sick’ rules and then there are ‘how far

can I push it?’ rules,” says Theresa Albert, a Toronto nutritionist and food consultant who also writes for Metro. “We have to move food through the danger zone as quickly as possible.” For chicken stock, you should play it safe and use within 3-5 days.

“If it was homemade chicken stock it would be less,” Albert says, noting that carton of chicken stock is higher in preservatives such as sodium.

Here’s a tip: use half the carton when you open it and freeze the other half.

Cooked turkey or chicken

Verdict: Use within three days or freeze.

You know that five-days-in-the-fridge smell? That’s spoilage.

“I probably wouldn’t use it up to a week past,” says Brita Ball, food safety consultant and adjunct professor at the University of Guelph. “When you’re getting to the fifth day you can start to smell a little bit of spoilage happening.”

Ball suggests freezing leftovers

immediately. “The sooner you freeze them, the better.” You could also recook the meat to kill off some of the “spoilage organisms,” which aren’t harmful. It’s the pathogens like salmonella you need to worry about.

Hummus left on the counter overnight

Verdict: Toss it or heat it up.

Jeffrey Farber, former director at Health Canada and current food science professor at the University of Guelph is quick to call this a big “no-no.”

“That type of product which is left out overnight, you never know,” he says. Farber is also wary of suggesting you use the hummus in cooking. As is Ball: “I don’t like to waste food, but I would throw it out, absolutely,” she says. She wouldn’t even cook with it. “Once it’s out on the counter, I have no idea what pathogens might be in there.”

Nutritionist Albert suggests it’s best to toss it if the hummus is mayo or yogurt based. She wouldn’t spread it on toast, but

might use it to thicken a soup or gravy.

Slow cooker chili with cooked ground beef, left on counter for 8 hours without power

Verdict: Toss it.

Don’t treat food safety like a game. “It could be the game of your life,” says Albert. If you forgot to turn the slow cooker on, start from scratch. “Ground beef is one of the highest risk foods. There’s just far too many opportunities for the beef to be contaminated.”

The standard is two hours of meat on the counter before it becomes a “food safety risk,” says Ball. “People waste food and they don’t need to. It’s OK to use food past the best before date, because that’s a food quality issue.” But food safety is different, she advises. This one’s a no-brainer.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



When leftovers start piling up in your fridge, don’t treat food safety like a game. “It could be the game of your life,” one expert says. ISTOCK

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IN THEATRES JANUARY 15

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Take the middle road with the X1



THE CHECKLIST 2016 BMW X1 XDRIVE 28I

THE BASICS

Type. Four-door, five-passenger compact SUV
Power. Turbocharged 2.0-litre four-cylinder (228/258)
Transmission. Eight-speed automatic
Price. \$38,800 (base); \$50,040 (as-tested), plus destination

COOL FEATURES

- Head-up display
- Heated steering wheel
- Connection package with concierge service
- Collision mitigation with emergency braking
- Panorama sunroof
- Hands-free liftgate operation
- Touchpad infotainment input



MAIN AND INTERIOR PHOTOS: JIL MCINTOSH/FOR METRO, OTHERS HANDOUT

POINTS

- The dash-mounted "tablet-style" infotainment screen keeps your eyes up at the windshield when you're looking at the system.
- The new design provides more headroom than before.
- Run-flat tires are standard equipment, but they can be swapped for regular all-season tires as a no-charge option.

MARKET POSITION

- The compact crossover/SUV is one of Canada's hottest markets, and many of the premium automakers are bringing out smaller models. The X1's redesign keeps its compact footprint but makes it roomier than before.

REVIEW

New BMW crossover good for both city and country

Jil McIntosh
For Metro Canada



Automakers often share vital components between their models, and that's what has happened with BMW's smallest crossover, its X1.

For 2016, it morphs into its second generation, with new styling and more interior space. But it now links with BMW's other brand, and shares its engine and driveline with the equally new Mini Clubman.

While it's still all-wheel drive like the previous X1, this newest model primarily works with its front wheels, sending power to the rear ones as needed for traction and stability on curves, acceleration, and slippery surfaces.

The new exterior design gives it more resemblance to the larger X3, while the roomy interior follows BMW's signature look. The styling is solid, but there's a lot of hard plastic on the dash that looks a bit cheap for the price.

My tester had optional sports seats that were very comfortable and supportive, along with sliding and reclin-

ing rear seats that fold almost flat for extra cargo space.

The X1's turbocharged 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine includes an auto start/stop system that shuts it off at idle, such as when you're waiting at a light, and automatically starts it again as soon as you take your foot off the brake.

It's smoother than many I've driven, but you can turn it off if you prefer.

This new engine actually makes a little less power than the previous generation, but you wouldn't know it by the feel behind the wheel.

The transmission is an eight-speed automatic that can be optioned to a performance version with paddle shifters, in a package that also adds a sportier steering feel.



Steering response is quick, and the X1 handles beautifully.

Steering response is quick, and the X1 handles beautifully. However, the ride is tuned for sports performance rather than luxury, and it's very firm.

The all-wheel system transmits power seamlessly between the front and rear axles. Although it's not really an off-road warrior, I've driven the X1 on a challenging course that it handled quite well, making it a feasible choice for those who spend weekdays on the asphalt, but like their weekends at the cottage and need something that can get them all the way there.

THE COMPETITION



Mercedes-Benz GLA 250 4Matic
Base price: \$38,000



Audi A3 Quattro
Base price: \$36,800



Lexus NX 200t
Base price: \$41,950



Workers at the Wolfsburg plant assemble the Volkswagen Beetle. COURTESY VOLKSWAGEN

HISTORY

Happy birthday bug! Beetle turns 70

In the days between December 25, 1945 and January 1, 1946 a little German car with an air-cooled engine at its rear and space for a family of four, rolled off the production line for the first time.

The Volkswagen Type 1, better known as The Beetle, went on to be one of the most important, iconic and biggest-selling cars of the 20th century and set the foundations on which its makers built one of the biggest car groups in the world.

However, if it hadn't been for the British military, the Beetle

and everything that has followed in its wake may never have been.

At the end of the Second World War, the military facility that had been building the Beetle's forerunner, the 'KdF-Wagen,' came under British control. And rather than shut it down, the military, under the leadership of one Senior Resident Officer Major Ivan Hirst, repurposed it for civilian production, undertook an initial order for 20,000 cars and preserved 6,000 jobs in the process. The idea was that the cars would be used by Allied forces stationed

in Germany and to begin with production was small-scale, just 1,000 cars a month. But spurred on by Hirst's vision and by the lifting of export restrictions plus currency stabilization, within three years the Beetle was on sale globally.

Dr. Manfred Grieger, Head of the Volkswagen Aktiengesellschaft Corporate History Department, describes Hirst as a "skillful pragmatist" who "gave the factory and the workforce a vision, motivating British military personnel and German workers alike to turn the lan-

guishing works into a successful market-driven business," he said. "He knew the qualities of the Volkswagen Saloon and was able to realize them on the road."

The Beetle ceased production on European shores in 1978 and global production ground to a halt entirely in 2003, by which time over 21 million had been produced. The car that replaced it, the VW Golf, has been twice as successful in terms of sales since production started, but such is the love for the old Beetle that VW decided to resurrect it as the "New" Beetle in 1997. AFP

Gold-medal Finnish

WORLD JUNIORS

Finland beats Russia in OT to claim its 4th under-20 title

Kasper Kapanen scored a wrap-around goal in overtime as Finland rallied past Russia 4-3 on Tuesday to win the world junior hockey championship.

Patrik Laine, Sebastian Aho and captain Mikko Rantanen all scored in the third period as Finland staged a late comeback. Kaapo Kahkonen made 22 saves for the win.

"That's one of those goals that you always dream of," said Kapanen. "I guess dreams do come true."

TUESDAY In Helsinki



Andrei Svetlakov scored twice for Russia and Vladislav Kamenev had the other goal. Alexander Georgiev stopped 25 shots.

On the winner, Kapanen deked around two defenders, skated around the back of Russia's goal and threw the puck into a wide-open net as Georgiev failed to dive back into position.



Finland's Kasper Kapanen, right, celebrates scoring the winning goal with teammates Vili Saarijarvi, left, and Joni Tuulola. RONI REKOMA/AF/GETTY IMAGES

"Everything's so blurry," said Kapanen when asked to describe the goal. "So excited and in shock at the same time."

It was Finland's fourth world junior title and second in the past three years.

"There's not a lot of words (for) how to describe the feeling," said Rantanen. "Very happy. Happy for the team, for the whole of Finland. We had an absolutely unbelievable crowd there and everyone was watching at home on TV."

Georgiev's start in net was a

BRONZE

Earlier in the day, Anders Bjork, Matthew Tkachuk and Ryan Donato each scored two goals as the Americans won bronze with an 8-3 win over Sweden.

surprise after Ilya Samsonov's solid 26-save performance in Russia's 2-1 semifinal win over the United States.

Although the fans at Hartwall

Arena - home of the Kontinental Hockey League's Jokerit club - were mainly Finnish, there were supporters from many of the participating nations in attendance. Many Canadians in attendance supported the host side even though the Finns eliminated Canada in the quarter-finals.

Red-clad fans could be seen waving Canadian flags and dancing in the stands along with Finnish supporters chanting "Suomi!" for all of the host side's goals. THE CANADIAN PRESS

REDBLACKS

Williams snags a contract extension

Henry Burris's favourite target is staying with the Ottawa Redblacks.

The Redblacks announced Tuesday they've agreed to a contract extension with the Williams, who was eligible to become a free agent next month. The speedy receiver had 88 catches for 1,214 yards — both team highs — last season, his first in Ottawa after two years in the NFL with the New Orleans Saints and Chicago Bears.

"They have a great rapport, on and off the field," Ottawa GM Marcel Desjardins said of Burris and Williams. "I think it's important for each of them to have the other there."

"(Williams) is a difference-maker, he's dynamic. Our of-

fence is going to be the same offence so we wanted to certainly have an impact player like him come back."

The five-foot-nine 155-pound Williams was one of four 1,000-yard receivers with Ottawa last season in former offensive co-ordinator Jason Maas's system. Burris, 40, took full advantage,

posting a career-best 70.9 completion percentage and league-high 5,703 passing yards in capturing the CFL's outstanding player award. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Chris Williams
THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

CFL IN BRIEF

Quarterback Nichols elects to stay in Winnipeg

Matt Nichols believes the Winnipeg Blue Bombers are close to being a CFL contender.

That's primarily why the veteran quarterback re-signed with Winnipeg on Tuesday rather than become a free agent next month.

Winnipeg acquired Nichols from Edmonton in September and he started seven games for the Bombers, completing 149 of 248 passes for 1,757 yards with 10 touchdowns.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Roughriders hire former Blue Bombers coach

The Saskatchewan Roughriders hired Markus Howell as their receivers coach Tuesday.

Howell joins the Riders after five seasons as a coach with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. Howell joined the Bombers as a defensive coach and special-teams assistant in 2011 but also worked as a linebackers coach before becoming a receivers coach in 2012.

Howell spent 11 CFL seasons as a receiver, defensive back and returner.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Stafford leads Jets past Predators

Drew Stafford scored a pair of power-play goals to lead the Winnipeg Jets to a 4-1 win over the Nashville Predators on Tuesday night.

Ben Chiarot and Alexander Burmistrov also scored and Connor Hellebuyck made 43 saves for the Jets. Hellebuyck turned aside 17 shots in the first, 12 in the second and 14 in the third.

Colin Wilson had the lone goal for Nashville, which has lost three of four.

TUESDAY In Nashville



Chiarot's goal was his first of the season. He hadn't scored since Feb. 8, 2015.

Winnipeg scored two power-play goals for the third time this season, with the last coming Oct. 18. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Anthopoulos rumoured to join Dodgers



Alex Anthopoulos was named 2015's MLB executive of the year by the Sporting News. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Former Toronto Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos will reportedly join the Los Angeles Dodgers, according to Vince Cauchon, a sports reporter for Quebec City's CHOI 98.1 who tweeted the news Sunday.

When contacted by Torstar News Service on Tuesday, Anthopoulos declined to comment.

The Dodgers have been a long-rumoured landing spot for the 38-year-old baseball executive, who opted to walk away from the Jays' front office in October after the franchise's most

successful season in 22 years rather than work under new team president Mark Shapiro.

The Dodgers' general manager is Farhan Zaidi, the former assistant GM of the Oakland A's with whom Anthopoulos has enjoyed a good working relationship for many years. Zaidi, like Anthopoulos, is Canadian. The Dodgers also recently poached international scouting executive Ismael Cruz from Toronto, so Anthopoulos would have other familiar faces in the organization.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



LEAGUE CUP LIVERPOOL EARNS SLENDER SEMI-FINAL LEAD
Roberto Firmino dribbles past Stoke City's Philipp Wollscheid during the first leg of the League Cup semifinal on Tuesday in Stoke. Jordan Ibe converted from close range before halftime after Joe Allen diverted a cross from Adam Lallana into his path as Liverpool won 1-0. GARETH COPLEY/GETTY IMAGES

FIFA INVESTIGATION

Valcke faces 9-year ban from soccer

Sepp Blatter's former right-hand man is facing a nine-year ban from soccer.

The FIFA ethics committee's lead investigator, Cornel Borbely, recommended the ban for Jerome Valcke on Tuesday after concluding his inquiry. In his final report, Borbely also asked that Valcke be fined 100,000 Swiss francs (\$100,000 US) and

that his prior 90-day suspension be extended for another 45 days.

Valcke, a Frenchman who served alongside Blatter as secretary general for nearly a decade, was accused of violating six articles of the FIFA code of ethics, including confidentiality and conflict of interest.

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DAILY WARM UP

Calgary **metr**

Ware and West filling in nicely

NFL

Little-known running backs delivered when Chiefs needed

Nobody will ever confuse Spencer Ware or Charcandrick West for Jamaal Charles.

Ware is a former sixth-round pick who didn't play a game last season, and landed with the Kansas City Chiefs almost as an afterthought. West was an undrafted free agent out of tiny Abilene Christian who had carried the ball a handful of times before Charles was lost to a season-ending knee injury.

It turns out the two of them together have been just as productive.

Forming a quintessential thunder-and-lightning combination, Ware and West have combined with the scrambling of quarterback Alex Smith to make the Chiefs one of the most productive running teams in the entire NFL. They're averaging nearly 130 yards per game, fourth-best in the league, even without the franchise's career rushing leader taking handoffs.

"It's nice to have a chance of pace," Smith said. "It's nice to have different guys to come in who have different strengths and different vision and give the defence a different look."

Neither of the fill-ins had a carry when Kansas City beat Houston in their season opener, so the Texans will face a new challenge when the teams meet in their wild-card game Saturday.

Ware resembles a

bowling ball, 230 pounds of muscle that will bruise and batter before going down. On one carry last week against Oakland, the former LSU star carried two defenders for extra yards even after brutalizing two other would-be tacklers.

West is more like a Ping-Pong ball, a jitterbug with an uncanny ability to ricochet around without losing inertia. Whereas his counterpart runs people over, West leaves them grasping at air.

"I feel like everybody isn't playing for selfish stats or stuff like that. Everybody's playing for each other," West explained, "and trying to accomplish that one big goal."

The Chiefs averaged less than 110 yards rushing in the four-plus games before Charles got hurt. In the 11 games since then, with West and Ware — and the scrambling of Smith — Kansas City is averaging nearly 136 per game, and has gone over 150 yards rushing five times.

There are extenuating circumstances, of course.

Those first six opponents included five that made the playoffs, while the final 11 were

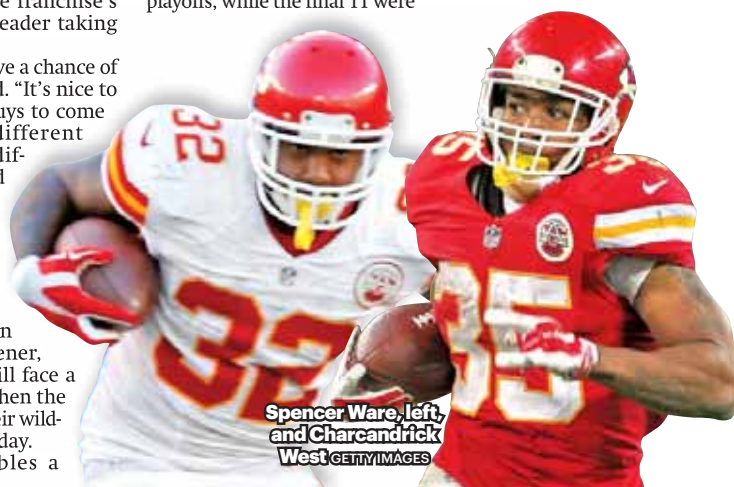
+ VS. CHARLES

While playing 15 games last season, Jamaal Charles carried 206 times for 1,033 yards and nine TDs. So far this season, Spencer Ware and Charcandrick West have combined for 232 carries and 1,037 yards with 10 touchdowns.

primarily teams that finished in the bottom half of their divisions. The Chiefs also played from ahead during the majority of those games, allowing them to control the clock by keeping the ball on the ground.

"That's again where the coaching comes in," Texans coach Bill O'Brien said. "Coach (Andy) Reid has a tremendous amount of experience in this league and he's seen it all. He's able to adapt when he loses a player — the next guy can step up and he knows how to use that player." Ware and West have not only stepped up, though. They've exceeded expectations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Spencer Ware, left, and Charcandrick West GETTY IMAGES

MLB

Stars file lawsuits vs. Al-Jazeera

Two Major League Baseball players have filed defamation lawsuits against Al-Jazeera America over statements made in a documentary about performance-enhancing drugs in sports.

Ryan Zimmerman of the Washington Nationals and Ryan Howard of the Philadelphia Phillies filed the suits Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Washington.

The suits refer to the documentary The Dark Side: Secrets of Sports Doping, which Al-Jazeera

+ TIES TO NFL

The documentary in question also suggested that Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning took GHG while recovering from neck surgery.

America broadcast Dec. 27. Each suit seeks an unspecified amount in damages. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Ryan Zimmerman. GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Hall of Fame likely out of reach for Bonds, Clemens

Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens and other tainted stars of the Steroids Era appear likely to get a boost in Hall of Fame balloting, but not enough to enter Coopers-town this year.

Ken Griffey Jr. seems assured of election on the first try Wednesday, possibly with a record vote of close to 100 per cent. Mike Piazza, Jeff Bagwell and Tim Lincecum also were strong candidates to gain the 75 per cent needed for baseball's highest honour.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Blue Jays bag Oakland right-hand reliever Leon

The Toronto Blue Jays acquired right-hander Arnold Leon from the Oakland Athletics on Tuesday in exchange for cash considerations or a player to be named later. The 27-year-old reliever made his big-league debut with the Athletics last season, going 0-2 with a 4.39 earned-run average over 19 appearances.

He had a 2-5 record and 2.95 ERA over 20 appearances (six starts) with Triple-A Nashville last year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rio stadium fires majority of staff ahead of Olympics

Administrators of Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana stadium have fired 75 per cent of the staff ahead of the 2016 Olympics.

The arena is to be used for up to nine months by Games organizers, who are bringing in their own workers for that period. Maracana administrators that the layoffs aim to cut costs while the stadium is under Olympic control. They declined to say how many employees are affected. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canada's Cirkunov to take on newcomer at UFC 196

Canadian light-heavyweight Misha Cirkunov will welcome American newcomer Alex (The Spartan) Nicholson to the UFC next month at UFC 196 in Las Vegas.

The 28-year-old from Toronto won his UFC debut in Saskatoon in August when he stopped late injury replacement Daniel (Werewolf of Texas) Jolly with 15 seconds remaining in the first round. It was the fifth straight first-round victory for the six-foot-three Cirkunov (10-2-0). The six-foot-four Nicholson is (6-1-0). THE CANADIAN PRESS

RECIPE One Pot Chicken Pasta



PHOTO: MAMA VISHNEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada



• 1/2 cup mozzarella

Directions

1. Warm up your olive oil in a large, deep skillet over medium heat. Brown the chicken, working in batches. Once all the meat is nicely browned but not cooked through, add the garlic and give it all a stir.

2. Now add the thyme and mushrooms and let them soften up and kick off their juices. Add the wine and/or stock, water and tomatoes. Break the tomatoes up with the back of a wooden spoon.

3. Bring the sauce to a bubbly simmer and add your pasta. As the pasta softens up in the heat, push it under the liquid. Depending on which pasta you're using it will take about 15 to 20 minutes. Check seasoning and remove from the heat.

4. Top evenly with mozzarella and serve.

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The genius of this recipe is that the pasta cooks right in the sauce, meaning you only have one pot to clean.

Ready in

Prep time: 30 minutes

Serves 4

Ingredients

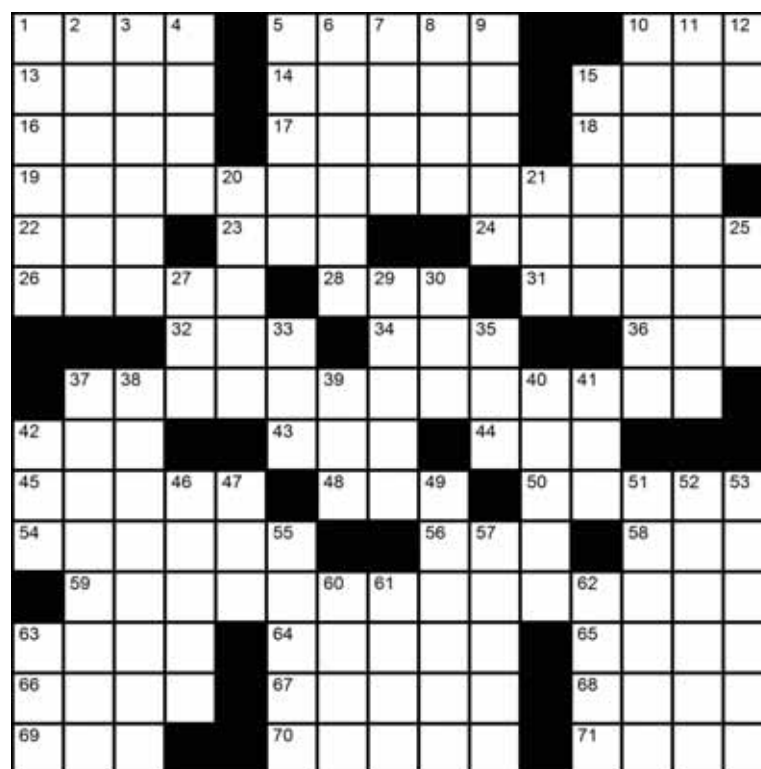
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts, cubed
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 Tbsp fresh Thyme
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup chicken stock (or 1 cup of stock if you don't have or feel like using wine)
- 1 x 28 oz can of whole tomatoes
- 1 cup water
- 225 grams of dried pasta
- Salt and pepper to taste

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. Tropical birds
5. Explode
10. Baseball bosses, briefly
13. Actor Rob
14. Singer Ms. Baker
15. Coin insertion place
16. ___ all possible
17. P.E.I., The ___ Province
18. Jekyll's other side
19. As per #37-Across... Tune by The Weeknd in the 'Favorite Song' category: 4 wds.
22. German article
23. 'Pay' suffix
24. Dawn goddess in Roman mythology
26. British singer/activist Billy
28. Vintage laundry detergent brand
31. Frankie Goes to Hollywood hit
32. Him, in Quebec
34. Dance step
36. 'Social' suffix
37. Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2016 on CBS... ___ Awards
42. ___ mode
43. Look
44. Energy unit
45. Gulf of St. Lawrence attraction, ___ Rock
48. 'Inc.' cousin
50. Canada ___ (Patriotic bird)
54. Tropical fruit
56. Hawaii's ___ Beach
58. Airport for The Kardashians,



- commonly
59. Maple taffy drizzled on snow treat in Quebec: 4 mots
63. Good: French
64. Rain/snow mix
65. Declare with certainty
66. As soon as...
67. Matrikin

68. Clay-ish stuff
69. Questionnaire question
70. Certain candle
71. Celebration cries!

DOWN

1. The Autobiography of ___ Toklas (1933 Gertrude Stein book)
2. "That's against the rules!": 2 wds.
3. "___ Be Your Man" by The Beatles
4. Rectangular

- paving*block
5. Bakery item
6. Like the book that's never been opened
7. Historic Canadian Louis
8. Base
9. Ms. Tucker
10. ___ Acid Peel

- (Dermatology clinic service)
11. Preside over the political debate
12. Fr. holy woman
15. Portion
20. Be a mirror in a just-used-shower bathroom: 2 wds.
21. Cat's coat
25. Logs-making need
27. Mop & ___ (Floor cleaner)
29. Bothered
30. Mr. Efron
33. They, in Sherbrooke
35. Talking Heads' "And ___ Was"
37. Creation of fashionable folds
38. Secret Service agent's electronics device
39. Fitting-here fish
40. Musical grinder
41. "___ Blind" by 54-40
42. Handheld add-on
46. Chili con ___
47. Storm's centre
49. Erase
51. John's "Grease" (1978) co-star
52. In a wise way
53. Strains
55. Plus
57. Tap liquid
60. Arm bone
61. Harvest
62. Effortless
63. Red carpet scarf

★ IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Take initiative. If you sit around waiting for others to make the first move it's unlikely you'll get anywhere. Aries is a Cardinal sign, meaning you have leadership qualities, so get out there and lead.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
There is a danger that with so many people singing your praises you'll lose sight of the fact that you make mistakes just like everyone. Don't let the hero worship go to your head.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
There may be a lot of stress in your life but you will find ways to cope. One way, of course, is to take nothing too seriously. If you can't laugh at life then you're doing it wrong.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Don't allow others to speak on your behalf. If you do there is a very good chance they'll say something that causes problems. Take responsibility for your own thoughts and beliefs — and always speak from the heart.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
How much do you trust someone? Enough to let them handle your money? If you're convinced that they won't cheat you then let them make decisions. If not, stay in control.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You want to push your luck today. You want to take chances. A link between the Sun and Pluto in your fellow Earth sign of Capricorn means you know that you can't be beaten.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
If someone needs your help today you must give it with no questions asked. A deed done with no thought for your own reward will do no end of good. The way to change the world is to be nice.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
This promises to be an excellent day socially, get out and make new friends and enjoy new experiences. Someone you meet on your travels will say something that opens your mind to new possibilities.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't follow the herd. Go your own way and, if certain people don't like it, take that as a sign you are on the right track. You make the rules.

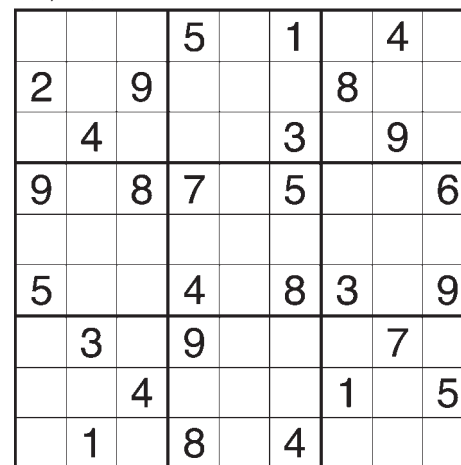
Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Stand back from yourself and work out why you think and act in certain ways. Once you realize that so much of what you do is done out of habit it will be easier to change things.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Use your powers of persuasion to do what needs to be done. It may be annoying having to rely on other people but the planets warn you won't get far on your own.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You're in the mood to take a few risks and they will pay if you join forces with like-minded people and work together towards a common goal. Anything is possible when you are part of a team.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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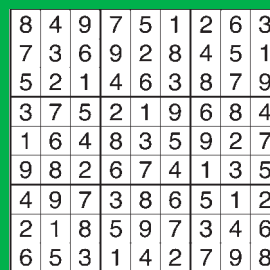
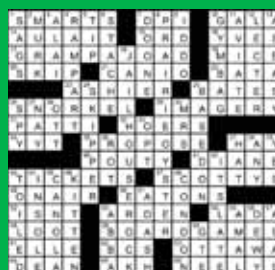
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JOHAN DEDEVOGD
10 YEARS



HAN KIM
24 YEARS



JOE CHIARIZIO
48 YEARS



AARON SNOWIE
8 YEARS



MICHAEL CYBULSKI
10 YEARS



GLEN BARRETH
PRESIDENT
45 YEARS



ROB COLEMAN
GENERAL MANAGER
20 YEARS



GERRY WOOD
DEALER PRINCIPAL
BIG 4 MOTORS



MARTIN VENNERI
SALES MANAGER
9 YEARS



DARCY SCHINNOUR
SALES MANAGER
19 YEARS



RAY BURNETT
10 YEARS



AHMED MANSOUR
8 YEARS



PHIL LAWRENCE
22 YEARS



JOHN QUINLAN
13 YEARS



JIM NARFASON
22 YEARS



MICHELLE MORGAN
15 YEARS



DOREEN THOMPSON
20 YEARS



BRUCE GIFFIN
10 YEARS



STACEY ROGOWSKI
4 YEARS



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